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JANE HUDSON.

I looked suddenly around, and beheld my father "in his throne," his shirt-sleeves rolled up, and his face lighted up by one of the brightest smiles in the world.—Page 46.

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JANE HUDSON;

OR,

THE SECRET OF GETTING ON IN THE WORLD.



T. NELSON AND SONS, LONDON, EDINBURGH;
AND NEW YORK.

MDCCCLV.



JANE HUDSON.

CHAPTER I.

A PATCH.

"HAVE you put your clean clothes away, Jane?"

"Yes, mother, as nicely as can be, and not one of them wanted mending."

"Well, now, you may take off your plaid-dress and sit down and try to patch the elbow," said she.

"Oh, mother, not now," I said, in a very beseeching tone. "I have got such a beautiful book to read, Cornelia Gordon lent me! She said she never stirred till she finished it. It is for a wonder the baby was left to her care; but she let him cry in the cradle, till he cried it out. It is beautiful, mother!" and I pressed the book to my bosom.

"Go and change your dress, my dear," repeated my mother.

"Oh, it is so pleasant, and pleasant Wednesday afternoons do not often come," said I, twisting up to the window, and observing the state of the weather. "I do not want to patch; I had rather walk, mother."

"I dare say you had, Jane; but I should think you would be quite ashamed of your elbow."

"I am, mother, sorry. I should like to put on my best dress, but I do not now feel like patching this;" and I opened the delightful book.

"Is that minding mother, Jane?" asked Jemmie, who was making a ball in the chimney-corner.

I began to read.

"Will you come here, Jane?"

As I approached her, she took my hand, and with her black eye looking full and meaningly into mine, she said, "Remember this, my daughter: never suffer yourself to indulge in any pleasure, either with a book or by a walk, or otherwise, to the neglect of a single household duty. If you do, you will find yourself among that great company of women who go through this life with holes in both elbows."

I cast down my eyes, then looked sideways toward Jemmie, and saw that his were fixed inquiringly upon mother's face.

"Who are they, mother?" he at length asked. "I never saw them."

"Nor I. I am sure I do not want to keep company with those who cannot mend their elbows;" trying to withdraw my hand.

"I am afraid you will, Jane," she said seriously, still looking into my eye.

"I hope not!" ejaculated Jemmie.

"I *will not*!" exclaimed I reddening. "Where do they stay?"

"They are women who are willing to attend to everything else before their home duties. Yet home duties,

Jane, are a woman's peculiar duties. If she neglect them, they will never be done at all. A woman may be very learned, very intelligent, very agreeable; but still, if she does not or will not attend to the sweeping, cleaning, darning, mending, &c., of her own family, she is as sadly out of the way, as glaringly deficient in all that would make her a truly complete and useful woman, as if she were dressed never so richly, yet with holes in her elbows."

"I guess everybody would pity her for the holes more than they would admire her dress, mother," cried Jemmie.

"Everybody would see them and call her a foolish woman, mother, not to know how to take care of her elbows!" said I.

"She would certainly be considered as lacking some important qualification. So you think, upon the whole, Jane, you would not wish to join such a company?" still looking straight at me.

"No indeed, mother; I hope not."

"Then you must see to it now, while you are a child, that the common household duties which belong to you are faithfully discharged. The common household duties are those which most easily escape us, though they are those upon which our comforts mainly hang. Faithfully finish these first, Jane, then take your leisure for reading, walking, or whatever pleasant recreation is proper."

"I understand it all, mother," said I, as she paused; "and I will take off my plaid-dress this minute and mend it;" thankful to see a way open to get my hand released, and to hide my face from her penetrating glance.

Behold then the child not long after, seated by a table, with needle, scissors, patch, and instructions how to proceed, casting now a glance out at the window, now at the book, then settling it down upon the well-worn plaid in her lap. There was a business-like air about her, notwithstanding stray desires lurking within her heart that were quite unbusiness-like.

"After you have finished, you can go out if you wish. Jemmie and Mary can take care of themselves," said my mother on re-entering the room, dressed in a plain suit of mourning, and intent upon an errand down into the village.

"Oh, mother, before you go, take Jane's book and put it away. She will steal into it; it will be a temptation she cannot stand, I know," looking at me all the time.

"Perhaps it is best to try her, Jemmie," answered she. "If Jane cannot withstand temptation, she is not worth anything; she will be like a leaf, turning with every wind that blows. While she is young, she must strengthen herself. A woman's life is made up of little doings, so small that they sometimes seem of little consequence, and she is easily tempted to set them aside or put them off to a more convenient season; yet little as they are, they are links in a long chain of duty; and as the loss of one link separates the chain, so one duty out of season disorders a whole day. Let Jane sit in the very face of the book and the weather, and courageously sew on the patch in spite of them. She will be a stronger and a better girl for it."

"Oh, I see it!" exclaimed I, my imagination seizing upon the chain. "If I do not patch now, when will it

be patched? That is the question. If I put off till night, then I cannot learn my lesson; if I do not learn my lesson to-night, why I must learn it to-morrow; if to-morrow, I may be late at school. I see it, mother," I said, heartily. "I see it. This is the link, now, to make the chain whole for a good many days to come, perhaps!" And I earnestly twitched the patch this way and that, to make it match the stripes. Seeing things in so hopeful a train, she departed. Nor had she been gone long, before a group of girls ran up the steps and knocked.

"Come, oh come, Jane! we want you to go to walk!" they exclaimed. "It is a splendid day. Put your things right on!" and they all huddled in.

"I cannot," I said. "I must finish my work first!"

"Do you mean that patching?" cried Cornelia. "You patching! A girl patch!" cried a second and third. "I am sure I would not stay in and patch such a day as this if I never had anything patched!"

"Then you will be likely to be a person out at both elbows," said Jemmie, peeping through Susan White's curls. Susan had thrown off her hood, and cast herself among his playthings.

"I out at both elbows!" exclaimed Cornelia, tossing back her head. "I can always have my mending done *for me!* I do not mend!"

"Those are just the ones," persisted Jemmie.

"I do not know how to mend. My father is rich enough without my mending;" and she stalked to and fro like a little queen.

"Some time or other you will see whether you are not out at both elbows," reiterated Jemmie. Cornelia reddened with anger, and looked at me.

"Oh, it is only some of Jim's fun," said I; "do not mind him. There he sits in the corner, and says just what he pleases; and we always let him, because he is sick."

"Are you not going? I am," she said, not relishing Jemmie's fun, in spite of my apology.

"I cannot possibly go now! I must stick to my patch until it is in!" not daring to look out at the window for fear of being tempted.

"It is too bad for your mother to make you work so!" said Cornelia. "Come, girls, let us go! I wish you would go, Jane; it is too pleasant to work! I declare it is! I would throw the patch into the fire and scamper!"

"I have a great mind to do it," I said, laughing. Jemmie looked reprovingly up.

"Oh, have you read this book, Jane?" said she, espying it on the table.

"My patch! This comes first; house duties before books, mother says!"

"Your patch!" she echoed provokingly. "Your patch! I think your mother is hard on you, Jane; why, mine would not think of asking me to do any such thing. She lets me do as I choose about such things."

Something like wishing for just such an easy life as Cornelia had was on my lips. It was not the first, neither was it the last time. I surveyed her, beautifully dressed in her chinchilla hat, and new Caroline-plaid pelisse, and Angola gloves, and thought:

"She will never have to patch, not she! I am likely to patch all the days of my life, beginning so early!"

Ah, I understand how to reason better now! And

do. Towards school-keeping my eyes still anxiously turned.

One day in March the farmer who usually brought wood for us from a neighbouring village, made his appearance in the yard with a large cart-load of firewood.

"There is Mr. Sykes!" cried Jemmie.

"We do not especially need that wood; besides I owe him a little on the last," said mother, rummaging for her pocket-book.

She went out to him. In a long discourse about the wood, the wind and the weather coming in for a share, (for Mr. Sykes was in no hurry to do business, besides feeling himself privileged to talk with mother, from long acquaintance with her father,) I heard him ask,

"Well, have you got any good schoolmistresses down here? I want to get one for our district—a real good one!"

"*I am she!*" I cried, starting up, as the words came through the porch. "Who will not call this an opening? Is it not, Jemmie?" and I ran to the porch-door to hear mother's answer.

She encouraged him with the probability that a schoolmistress could be found for his district, such as he desired.

Shall I run out and propose myself, or—or—or? darted through my mind. I decided upon *or*, as the most dignified way of conducting the matter. In a word, I remembered that Mr. Sykes was a brother to our good Deacon Sykes, who, perhaps, would recommend me. My mother decided favourably upon the wood.

As soon as she re-appeared, "Mother!" I exclaimed, excitedly, "did you think of me? Shall not I take that school? Is not that an opening? And is it not provi-

dential that he spoke to us upon the subject first? We can be first on the carpet!"

"There is nothing like trying, Jane, though I will not determine how far you answer the description," said my mother, smiling.

"And I can apply to the deacon, mother, and he can recommend me to his brother. It seems so providential, too, that the deacon is his brother, because he is so friendly to us. He will aid me, I know!" Thus ran my thoughts.

"It certainly is a spoke in the wheel, is it not, mother? farmer Sykes and Deacon Sykes being brothers," said Jemmie, looking up from his work, with great interest. Though Jemmie could engage in no out-door sports and duties like other boys, in many ways he made himself useful within. He was then braiding a palm-leaf hat. Making palm-leaf hats for several years was a great business with him, affording at once a pleasant occupation and the means of adding his mite to the family funds.

"It certainly is a spoke," said my mother.

As usual, a full discussion of farmer Sykes' inquiry took place at the evening fireside, and the decision was unanimous that it was an opening which I had better try to fill.

"The deacon will befriend you, Jane, I know; and I will go myself and ask him to recommend you!" said George.

"No—let Jane apply herself," said my mother. "It is important for her to get accustomed to business matters, you know."

And not many days afterward, I sallied out in quest

of Deacon Sykes. He was a blacksmith, and morning, night, and noon saw him toiling at the anvil. There must he be sought, for I knew I should have more courage, and could speak more freely with him alone, than in the presence of his family; and seeing him was in every respect preferable to writing. Past disappointments in no degree damped the new expectations and new efforts upon which I was entering. Circumstances compelled me to action, and I was up and ready to act heartily.

Coming in sight of the deacon's little black shop, holding somewhat of a conspicuous position at the corner of a street and lane, my feet lagged and my heart beat quickly. To revive my courage and gain strength for the interview, I resolved to cross over and pass by on the other side, reconnoitering the premises, to see if all things were favourable. Neither horse nor ox was waiting to be shod; neither cart, waggon, nor man occupied the coal-trodden stand before the door of the smithy. A secret hope lurked within, that something or somebody would appear to prevent, or at least delay the meeting. But no, the way was never clearer. Nobody in sight or hearing but one of his little boys, playing hide-and-seek with a dog between two old cart-wheels, standing against the left side of the shop. "Now is the time," I cried quickly, and quickly turned about upon my errand, hastening up to the little fellow, and asking him to call his father to the door for a moment. He scampered in—the dog after him.

"Courage," I said, trying to feel unconcerned; and in order to do so, turning my attention upon the little brooks, muddy and babbling, being set in motion by

the March thaw, that were running down the lane.
"Courage!"

It was but for a moment.

"Here is father!" cried the little boy at my elbow.

I looked suddenly around, and beheld "father," in his leather apron, shirt-sleeves rolled up, and his face lighted up by one of the kindest smiles in the world. It was just the face to ask a favour of, and I felt sure that I should be successful.

"Ho! ho!" cried the Deacon, "didn't know I was going to meet a lady. Not in good trim, but just as glad to see you for all that. How is your mother, Jane?"

Answering for her good health, I coughed and hemmed, and at last came out with my business, my courage rising, as I went on, at the pleased and interested expression upon his countenance.

"Yes, yes! that I will! I will give you a recommendation!" A slight and pleasant motion of the head. "Your examination! I remember hearing of it. It was you who wrote that piece about the town. Yes, yes! I will send word to my brother. But, stop. I am going over in a day or two, and I will see to it all myself. It is a good place! They think a good deal of their school-mistresses! I will see to it myself, Miss Jane!" And I knew that he would.

"Is not Deacon Sykes a good man, mother?" inquired Mary, after recounting the afternoon's adventure for the second time, when we were all re-assembled around the fire, after tea. "And little Sarah Sykes is just like him. All the girls at school love her dearly."

"I always liked him," said Jemmie. "It was really

kind in him to say he would see to it all himself. And, mother, do you not know how he has taken me out to ride when I was sick?"

My mother nodded assent.

"Yes, and when he comes to the store, he never beats us down; wanting Mr. Emery to take less than he gave for it, as some people do! He bargains like a man!" exclaimed George, spiritedly.

George was now in Mr. Emery's store. My mother had destined him for a trade, but that gentleman thought he discovered in my brother an aptitude for business, which greatly pleased him. He talked with our mother, and making her a generous offer for his services, George soon took his place behind the counter.

George told several pleasant stories of the deacon's kindness and readiness to help, that he had heard at Mr. Emery's, the truth of which was corroborated by instances of a similar nature within our own family history. Indeed, never was a church blessed with a better deacon. The whole village felt his benevolent spirit. Deacon Sykes was decidedly the hero of the evening; and we retired, well satisfied that our plans were in safe keeping.

What was to be the result? I looked anxiously forward.

CHAPTER IV.

AN ERA.

SABBATH evening was a delightful season in our little circle. There were no evening meetings, in those days, to take us from home. We never visited, and seldom

received visits, except perhaps the occasional call of some good man of the church, to inquire after the moral or religious welfare of my mother's little flock, and to proffer her his Christian sympathies. We usually reviewed the Catechism, repeated hymns, rehearsed all we could remember of the sermons, and sung together. I cannot even now listen to Old Hundred, or Mear, or Wells, or Windham, or St. Ann's, or St. Martin's, without a homesick longing for those blessed times, those precious old times, when our voices all joined together, making the little back sitting-room echo with the melody of Jehovah's praise. There was mother in her rocking-chair at one corner, Jemmie opposite her, in his low couch-chair; Mary on a little stool by mother's side, her little hands clasping one of mother's, while George and I are at the table, with our books, presiding over the order of the hour, (whether singing or reciting,) a small tallow candle, of home-manufacture, flaming or flickering over our pages. What a cheerful radiance and warmth did the fire-light then impart, flinging our shadows on the wall, while brightening our faces, and warming our feet, and casting the little tallow candle quite in the back-ground. Ah, Sabbath evening was never a dull or joyless evening to any one of us. While it was truly a day and evening of rest—rest from the needle, the kitchen, and the counter—rest from toil, it was also a day of activity, of progress, of improvement.

Every book and engagement was appropriate to the sacredness of the occasion; and yet, under our mother's judicious training, nothing was wearisome or spiritless, as Sabbath-day exercises are so wofully prone to be, even to children of pious parents.

We were singing,

"While thee I seek, protecting Power,
Be my vain wishes stilled," &c.

a favourite hymn of mother's, when lo ! a knock at the door.

Mary smoothed down her apron, drawing her stool closer to mother ; Jemmie drew himself up on his couch ; I snuffed the candle ; while George answered to the summons, soon ushering in Deacon Sykes.

How glad we were all to see him ! I can now see the flush of pleasure mount into Jemmie's pale face, as the deacon folded his hard bony hand around the thin shadowy fingers of the sick child, and said :

"Ah, here is my old friend James ! Well, my boy, we must have another ride together before the snow all goes !"

As for me, my hand trembled when he took it, for I felt that my destinies were in his hands, rough and hard as they were, and that his present call was in some way blended with them. I remember I slipped out of the room into the porch, to suppress the agitation which I began to feel at the possible result of the deacon's application or "recommendation."

Back in my chair again, he turned round and looked meaningly at me.

"Now it is coming," thought I ; "let me receive it courageously, good or bad. I am a year older and taller."

"Well, Jane," (he began so good-humouredly, that I was sure he had good news. Then turning to mother), "So, Mrs. Hudson, your daughter Jane is going to be a schoolmistress, is she ?"

"If you can see fit to recommend her to a situation, Mr. Sykes," said my mother, smiling.

"I can, Mrs. Hudson, and I have. I told my brother about her," and—and—and, the good man's story was probably more interesting to the little group which then listened, than it can be to my readers now. Suffice it to say, that no other teacher had been thought of—that my offer was before them, with Deacon Sykes to back me up—one whose wise judgment on general matters entitled his judgment upon schoolmistresses to no inconsiderable degree of respect among his peers.

For some days I felt that I was almost as sure as if I had been in the school-house with the children around me.

Who would come for me? How I should go? How much would they give me? were interesting questions often agitating our little kitchen. Every day I took my seat at the window, in the direction whence farmer Sykes and his wood usually made their first appearance, to watch his arrival, or the arrival of some messenger to apprise me of my success.

Seven days did I watch in vain. Neither horse nor waggon stopped at our gate, and my heart began to sink at the possibility of another disappointment. On the eighth day I took my seat by mother at the little stand, resolving to abide the event with firmness and patience. And it was sew! sew! sew! while Jemmy sat beside us, sometimes braiding on his palm-leaf, sometimes reading us a story.

A knock at the porch door.

"Let me go!" said Jemmie. "Oh, mother, I wish I could run like other boys! I am so, so tired!" He took his cane and hobbled to the door.

"Is your mother in, or your sister? I wish to see your oldest sister." It was farmer Sykes's voice.

"Mother! mother!" I whispered hastily, striving to keep down the rising agitation. Jemmie ushered him in.

In half an hour or so my fate was decided. I was schoolmistress elect of District No. 1, in the little village of ———. Ah, it was the proudest and happiest hour of my life! Success had at last crowned my efforts.

The good news was duly proclaimed to George and Mary, as soon as they reached home; and despite the work we had to do, I could not resist stealing twenty minutes, after washing the dishes, to look into my grammar, and also to see just how far I had gone in arithmetic.

In the third week in May, two important departures took place. Cornelia Gordon and her companions returned to Derry, and I, myself, to ———.

A few days before she went, I took some work home which we had done for Mrs. Gordon.

"Oh, come up stairs!" cried Cornelia. "Sarah May is here. I am beginning to pack up!"

And well she might begin in season, for she had more dresses about the room than I ever had in my life.

"Here is my new gingham, Jane; is it not a beauty?" she cried. "And my yellow crape! I teased mother for this yellow crape! None of the girls will have anything prettier than that; and you know you brought home my two new white dresses!" And she ran on, displaying her ample wardrobe with the greatest good-nature.

"Oh, Jane, I wish you were going to Derry! It is too bad that your mother will not let you."

"Mother cannot afford it," I answered gravely.

"Cannot afford it! Cannot afford it! So father often says. But he can afford it. We always get out of him—mother and I—just what we want; so I do not believe in 'cannot afford it.'"

Cornelia spoke truly. She probably had never a wish denied.

"Why, Jane is going to keep a school!" said Sarah.

"Keep a school!" exclaimed Cornelia. "Not possible! Such a little thing as she is! Why, Jane, you ought to go to school! What upon earth does your mother let you keep a school for? Why, you will die to keep school. You ought to go to school, I say! Jane keep school!" and Cornelia burst into a loud laugh.

I was at a stand. The yellow crape dress fell from my hand. I did not know whether to cry or laugh with her. Was she making fun of me? Did she think I did not know enough, or that the scholars would not obey me? I felt angry and mortified. That a position so long sought, so ardently desired, should be treated in this way, was extremely painful to me.

I must be unfit for it. They think I shall never get through with it. They think I do not know enough. It will be a failure!" All these thoughts passed rapidly through my mind, blurring my eyes, and sinking my spirits.

"Jane a schoolmistress! Why, they will not mind you, Jane!" cried Cornelia. "You must get a stick bigger than you are." Cornelia was privileged to say and act just as she pleased among her companions. Had any one else dared to treat my new prospects in a way like this, I should have hardly borne it.

"Well, I think your mother ought to send you to

school," declared she, her mirth having in some good degree subsided. "That is what I think!"

"My mother has no money to pay my bills at school, We are poor. She would be very glad to have me go—as glad as I should be to go—but I must teach, now, to get money. I must get my own living, and I want to do it by teaching. I must begin in a small way, and then work my course up, if I can." This was a great deal for me to say, in my excited state of mind.

"How much do they pay you, Jane?" asked Sarah.

"A dollar and a half a week, and I board around; that is, take my board at the houses of the scholars, a week or so at each. In twelve weeks, you see, I shall earn eighteen dollars,"—a sum which I expected would amaze my companions, as it did Jemmie and I, as we reckoned it up and repeated it over.

"Only a little more than what my Canton crape and trimmings come to," cried Cornelia; "and you have to work twelve long weeks for it!"

I was discouraged. "How differently the same things look to different people!" I thought. The sum which seemed so large, and the opportunity which seemed so providential for earning it, in our little back kitchen, with an invalid brother on one side, and a mother hard at work on the other, dwindled rapidly down to nothing in Mrs. Gordon's best chamber, strewn all over with beautiful things, and beside a yellow Canton crape, which cost almost as much. I soon left the room, in no way improved by the short visit up stairs.

"Oh, I wish I were as well off," said I, as I passed through the long entry on my way out. "I—poor I. I have to work every inch of my way!"

On returning home, I felt neither like speaking nor working. Everything looked hard and up-hill. I wondered why the Gordons were so rich and we so poor, and felt disposed to murmur and to be unthankful.

"Mother," I said—toward the close of a speechless hour—"mother, Cornelia Gordon has such beautiful things! Her new yellow crape cost almost as much as my whole summer's work will come to!"

"But her money does not buy things half as valuable as your's will. You have a secret that she has never learned. The possession of such a secret is even greater than the possession of money."

I looked inquiringly up, at this unexpected turn of the matter. "What is so great as money, mother?"

"KNOWING HOW TO USE IT," she answered, slowly and quietly.

"I am sure there is nothing difficult in that, mother!"

"On the contrary, it is one of the most difficult things in the world, Jane! There is nothing like scanty means to teach one to distinguish between what is really necessary and important for us, and what is not. This knowledge, wisely improved, will put you in a way of spending your money to the best advantage; at the same time, if your money is dearly earned, you will be so much the less likely to part with it, unless for something really worth it."

I pondered for some time.

"Oh, mother, I think they ought to give me more than nine shillings a week—only eighteen dollars for a whole summer! How easy Cornelia can get eighteen dollars! She only has to ask for it!" It was peevishly spoken.

"—While you must work for it, Jane," added my mother.

"Work! work! Nothing but work for me. None of the other girls know what work is!" And I was as discontented as I could well be.

"And what is the evil or the harm of working, Jane?" she asked, in one of her quietest tones. I made no answer.

"The fact is, Jane," she continued, earnestly, "everybody has something to do. God did not place us here to be idle. He has given to each one—to you and to me, to George and to James—a work to accomplish—a work of some kind. Yours is fairly before you. You can see it and measure it, and in some degree can look forward to results. Your school this summer, if you have the courage and ability to sustain it, will enable you to get a better education; a better education will entitle you to a wider sphere of action, and on—and on—we know not the end. Instead of measuring yourself by others, who have apparently less before them, and then grumbling, and shrinking, and holding back, and growing dissatisfied and disheartened, GO FORWARD and GRAPPLE with your work courageously, heartily, with patience and industry. You can never get away from your present situation but by persevering efforts. Look, then, straight at it. Not at what this one has, or that one, but keep your eye fixed on present duty, and work at it. Can you not do that, Jane? Can you not be up and doing with a cheerful energy? Work is no drudgery to her who has resolution; it is only a bugbear to the idle and irresolute."

I knew she was sustained by a trustful reliance on a

covenant God, and that she was willing to receive the allotments of his providence as the very best that could happen to her. It was no stoical effort to brave difficulties, but a simple confidence that all things shall work together for good to those who are the children of God in Christ Jesus. It was with such a faith that she strove to have us armed.

"It certainly does not seem a bugbear in your hands, mother!"

One of her pauses ensued, when she meant I should reflect.

"What is Cornelia's work?" I asked, finding it not so easy to dispense with Cornelia's case.

"I do not know. Sooner or later our work all comes to us," she answered.

Mother's words of wisdom were not always easy nor rapid of digestion; but they did fasten themselves upon us, and in process of time, like leaven, worked themselves into our hearts, and produced fruit in our lives. The great secret was, that she lived up to the rules she prescribed for us. She never suffered herself to be appalled or disheartened by the most adverse or discouraging circumstances; but wisely, patiently, and cheerfully wrought out for herself and little ones, a path, a good path—a path which, if it had thorns, had roses also, and led to safe results.

On a bright, cool Saturday afternoon, a boy drove his waggon into our yard, to take me away to the scene of my future labours. A yellow bandbox contained my simple wardrobe; a new calico dress for Sundays, my faded green for every day, with a few other necessary articles, completed the list, except a black silk which I

had on, and which was an old one of my mother's, newly dyed. We were all in the sitting-room, where, as a parting courtesy, a small fire had been kindled before dinner. George caught up the bandbox, and ran to stow it away in the hinder part of the waggon. I drew my shawl closely around me, and looked about to see if anything were missing or unthought of. Ah, it was to hide the struggle, as I began vividly to realize that I was indeed going away from home! Mary hugged my bundle of books in her arms. "I will carry these! I will carry them, and give them to you after you are in."

Jemmie went to the window. I beheld him quickly rubbing the back of his hand across his eyes; and mother—always thoughtful and at work—mother was mending an old umbrella, which she was sure I should need, and which they must contrive to spare me. Placing it in my hand, "There, Jane," she said, cheerfully, for a sob from Jemmie had just brought tears into Mary's eyes; "now all is ready. You will have a pleasant journey! I wish we were all going to have one. And then, in a month you will spend Sunday with us. Mr. Sykes promises that! Only a month! Behave like a woman, Jane. Do not be afraid of small obstacles. God bless you, my daughter!" There was a slight agitation betrayed in her voice, and then she kissed me. Then there were kisses to Jemmie and Mary, mingled with tears.

"Pooh! what is the use of kisses!" cried George, feeling it his duty to be manly. "Come, Jenny, I will help you into your carriage. Ah, you may be good, but you will never be great," he declared, laughingly putting his arm around my waist. "She will never be great if she is only a schoolmistress; will she, mother?"

"You come to my school, and I will show you what I can do, master George," hastening away under the light of George's bantering.

I tripped as I got into the waggon. Mother ran out to ascertain if no evil had befallen my dress. Mary got upon the wheel to hand me the bundle of books. George again jumped up behind to see if the bandbox was safe. All was snugly packed. The boy took his place by my side. I looked around for Jemmie. There he still stood at the window, neither speaking nor moving, but looking sadly pale.

Good-bye! good-bye! good-bye!

I kissed my hand again and again to the dear ones (never dearer) as we turned away from the door. Just going out of sight, I turned around for one more glance at the old house. Mary was stretching her neck out at the gate, looking after me. Still at the window was Jemmie. I waved my handkerchief. Dear, dear sick brother. I know he will miss me!

I was now out upon the wide world, alone. Never before from home, or away from my mother's counsel, I was now to push my way among strangers, teaching, admonishing, counselling, correcting, and chastening dozens of untutored minds, and ruling, not only over others, but over the untried powers of my own spirit.

I did not then know the magnitude of the work before me. Happy for us that our work, which, seen in the bulk, must overpower us, is meted out to us in seconds and minutes and hours and days, each bearing its own burden.

A few days completed my fifteenth year.

Two days after, on a bright pleasant April morning, the five rode by in a stage-coach loaded with baggage, smiling, and bowing, and shouting good-byes to everybody as they passed.

"Going to school is more necessary to me than to any of them, and yet here am I with no school at all!" and I dropped a tear on the faded calico sleeve that was rolled up while I was washing the dishes.

"But I will study for all that, school or no school!" I exclaimed, resolutely. "Money buys schools, but it does not always buy a good education. Something more for that. It is the will and power to improve, mother says."

James was taken sick, and for some time my mother found no leisure to plan about studies. Meanwhile, every spare moment was given to my books; but I felt I was not progressing. It was at a time too when every hour was precious, and a keen thirst for knowledge was upon me.

"I must be up and doing!" I said inwardly a hundred times, whenever the lagging rate of my studies came into comparison with my desires, yet striving all the while to go about every household duty with quiet industry.

My aim was to be a teacher, and to be a good teacher; and that aim it became my fixed purpose, under the blessing of God, to reach. To further this, then, what was I to do but patiently wait for an opening? No, not until my utmost efforts were made, then I could wait, and wait patiently. "Where there is a will, there is a way," mother says, and my energies were up and on the alert.

I began to look about once more for something I could do in order to earn the means of attending some good school, the Derry school perhaps.

One day some one happened to say that the Green Lane school-district was without a teacher. I knew the school was a small one, and composed principally of little children, at least in the summer season. The school-house was not more than a mile and a half from my home, presenting all the advantages of boarding at home, and helping mother in more ways than one, besides the pleasure of taking one of the pleasantest walks in the village. These were indeed advantages, and they rapidly passed through my mind.

"I will propose myself," was the instant conclusion. "What an opening! There is no other district I could take; they are all so large. Really, it seems as if Providence had designed it for me. Oh, to be earning something!" And all that day a new alacrity was in every motion.

Assured of my mother's sanction, I concluded not to tell her of my good fortune, for it really seemed so just the thing, that I felt confident of success. And then "such a capital opportunity of beginning to teach!" Yet I thought I would not tell her until I was sure—the engagement being actually made. But how was I to propose myself? Shall I call upon one of the committee, or send a note? I thought the latter less embarrassing, and never was note penned with greater care. Every *t* was crossed, every *i* dotted, and every stop made, with an exactness worthy of the occasion. The committee should at least see that the new candidate could write correctly. It was to be sent early in the evening, and

left at the door of the school committee man, my courage not having risen high enough to run the smallest chance of meeting so important a personage in broad daylight.

How varied were my feelings on that solitary walk homeward! I had taken my first great step toward providing for myself, and assuming the new responsibility of helping our dear family. It seemed as if weighty matters were in progress. I was no longer a child. I felt that the abilities of womanhood were upon me. I longed to think and act in a larger sphere, and to be engaged in duties which would afford a wider scope to an earnest and awakened spirit. It did not seem to me I could fell another gusset or stitch another shirt bosom, at least without the prospect of going to school again.

When I went home, mother was dressing Jemmie's foot (Jemmie was a cripple), and so busy was she, that I could only help her. Little Mary was up. I took her in my lap and undressed her for bed, hearing her repeat the beautiful hymns with which our mother used to store our minds when we were yet very little. Mary appeared to me in a new aspect. I thought of her as my scholar.

On retiring to rest that night, the idea that I might soon go out into the world to act for myself oppressed me sorrowfully. For the first time it struck me that my mother's love and protection were not omnipresent; and I shrank from duties in which she had no part or lot. I seemed then to be feeling about, darkly enough, for that love, and help, and strength which the Father of our spirits can alone give us. I remember I arose, not to say my prayers again, but I kneeled down and prayed from a full, oppressed heart, that the God of my mother would be my God, that her Saviour would become my Saviour

and my Friend. I felt the weakness and waywardness of my own nature, and could only say with the apostle, "I can do all things through CHRIST, who strengtheneth me."

The next day, as we sat together sewing, while Jemmie and Mary were by themselves, I opened to her the important matter, which lay next to my heart; the desire I had for an education, and the steps I had taken in consequence of it. As I went on I grew warmer.

"And now is not Green Lane just the opening I wanted? earning and learning to keep school too! Is it not, mother?"

She looked surprised, as she was apt to look, at any resolute advances of mine, my dreaming childhood giving little promise of vigorous effort. Oh, I owed it all to her training! She looked surprised, smiled, and acknowledged it did certainly seem very providential, if I could get the school, but bade me not to be too sanguine.

"Remember, Jane, we often need as much resolution to bear disappointments as we do to make efforts."

"But, mother, it seems just the niche for me to fill! You and Mary must come up and see me! And then to board at home too! Helping you, mother! Just think! It will be a beautiful walk for you to take, and the walk will do you good!"

Altogether it seemed the most probable thing in the world, despite my mother's warnings about a disappointment.

Ah, I did not then know all the difficulties of getting into office.

One—two—three—four days passed away, and no answer to my note. Was it ominous of good or evil? Every knock at the door fluttered me. A week gone,

and no answer. I went out to do some shopping for mother one day—the seventh from the note—when behold, on turning a corner, the committee man appeared on the opposite side! He looked hard at me. I felt like sinking to the earth, and then he crossed over.

“Is not this Miss Jane Hudson?” he asked, planting himself before me.

“Yes, sir.”

“Well, you wrote me a note—been meaning to answer it. Yes; well—you wanted the Green Lane School?”

I am sure every light and shade of feeling must have been visible in my burning and anxious face.

“Yes, sir.”

“Well, the fact is!—the fact is—” he smoothed down his red whiskers, “the fact is, Miss Jane! I remember you at examination. You did well—” I took encouragement, “the fact is, I spoke to the rest of the committee about you, but—” he hemmed audibly, “but we think you are—too little!” and he looked down upon me with a perplexed and sorry air.

I received the announcement bravely. I neither wept nor whimpered, even by myself; but I felt the disappointment to the innermost place of my heart.

“I know I am little, but I have a large spirit, and I feel that I can do!” So I ended the subject with my mother, drawing myself up an inch taller. “I should like to show Mr. Dow that little bodies can do something.”

Thus ended my connection with the Green Lane school.

Mr. Dow put in his niece, a burly damsel, who, if size were the chief requisite, promised extraordinary success.

And now, what was to be done? Was there anything

else I could put my hand to? anything, at least, which I was not too little to accomplish? My eye and ear were open. Again a path seemed in sight.

"Mother," said I, one Saturday evening, after a long silence, "I like children, and now I have a plan. You know Mrs. Gordon talked to-day about that lady who had come to pass the summer in town, and she wanted very much to find somebody to take care of her children. Now, mother, am I not just the one, if she will pay me for it?" still keeping my eyes upon the same coals over which I had been ruminating, for I did not know what reception my new plan might meet with.

"Our Jane go to service!" cried George, starting up. George had been passing a year at his uncle's, and had come back with some notions not quite corresponding to his situation.

"Our Jane go to service!" he repeated. "I hope, mother, you will not let her do any such thing. It seems to me Jane does not think much of herself."

"I think enough of myself to wish to get a good education, George," I answered; "and in order to get that, I must work for it in some way or other."

"But going to service!" he cried, scornfully.

"And what is the harm, George?" asked my mother, placidly.

"Why, it's—it's—being a servant, mother!" reiterated George.

"Precisely so," said she, in the same tone; "but where is the harm of Jane's taking every honest means of getting a good education?"

"Every honourable means, mother; but I do not think it would sound very well to have it said, 'The

Hudson girls have to go to service.' What would uncle's family say?"

"In the first place, we must look at our situation just as it is, and judge of everything we do according to it."

Meanwhile, I was thankful mother had taken up the argument, for George would have driven me off soon enough by his bold assertions.

"We are poor, George. Industrious efforts to maintain ourselves are certainly more commendable than idleness: do you not think so?"

George could not but admit it.

"You are all looking forward toward supporting yourselves—Jane, as well as her brothers. She has always thought of teaching as her business or profession, and we think she has talents and capacity, which, if properly cultivated, may fit her to be a good and useful teacher. But the best means of qualifying her for that calling are not within her reach, unless she is willing to make efforts to get them; or, in plain speech, to work for them. Now, how can any honest work, in the attainment of such an end, lower Jane in her own estimation, or in anybody's else? Would it alter your opinion of Jane?" she asked, looking at him with one of those looks of hers which meant so much.

George thought it would not; but other people—what would they say?"

Why, are they not capable of judging as sensibly as you, George?"

George made no answer.

"But they will not," he muttered at last; "you know that, mother!"

"If they judge foolishly, that is their look out, not Jane's. What she is to do, is to go straightforward in the prosecution of her aims. She has made up her mind what to do, and now she means to do it. Will Jane suffer in anybody's estimation, whose esteem is worth having, for acting thus?"

"No, mother, no!" cried James, enthusiastically.

"But, after all," continued she, "we must act for ourselves, and not be governed by other people's notions; and be sure, George, we shall never act independently, vigorously, and honestly, if we are looking more at what the world says, than we do at what God and our duty demand of us."

"But 'going to service!'" persisted George, though in a less positive tone. "It seems to me there is something for Jane to do besides 'being a servant!'"

"You know just how the matter stands," said I.

"'Service' is only one branch of labour. I do not know of anything which degrades it, but the character of the labourer. Jane can preserve her integrity and self-respect as well in taking care of Mrs. Friendly's children, as in presiding at the Green Lane school; and she will have quite as good an opportunity of acquiring business-habits, of learning the great art of self-control, and self-sacrifice, and patient effort (so much needed in the world), as she could have under any circumstances."

There was a pause. George sat twirling his two thumbs around each other (his favourite mode of evincing perplexity); James and I were looking at mother, who quietly rocked in her chair, while the firelight danced in our faces, revealing lines of thought and solicitude.

"Then, shall you let Jane go?" at length inquired George, looking up.

"Do you not think it is best for her, if thereby she is getting the means of advancing herself in her studies?" asked mother, who always accustomed us to a free expression of our opinions, that she might be better enabled to set them right.

"I do not know but it would," answered he, somewhat reluctantly, evidently, if convinced at all, convinced very much against his will.

"But I want you to look the affair straight in the face, George," she continued, "because it is an important matter to have right notions about. Instead of living week after week, month after month, and perhaps year after year, still finding herself no nearer the object of her wishes—anxious and dispirited, wishing and hoping—is it not far better for her resolutely to go to work—any honest work—in order to get the means of pushing forward her studies? With the means in her hand, you know, she can go on, and not till then. Everything before that must be at a stand-still. Both young men and young women are often brought to just such a pass, and alas! they often shrink from it. They say, 'Why, I cannot do this,' and 'I cannot put my hand to that,' or 'What will people say?' and so are contented to sink into obscurity and uselessness, when a little independent exertion would place them in positions of trust and importance.

"What would you advise your sister to do, George?" asked mother, not at all disposed to let him off. "Would you prefer to have her sit and wait—at a period, too, when the improvement of her time is all-important—for

imaginary advantages, while real advantages, however humble, can be secured?"

"I can't say I should," replied he, "because Jane can be somebody anywhere, I suppose."

"She certainly can if she has good sense, and resolution enough to meet her circumstances, and not let her circumstances control her. If she can rise superior to the foolish and often false estimates of the world, and act with independence and judgment, Jane can qualify herself for any situation. It is not so much that people have not the ability to do, that there are so many weak and inefficient men and women in the world, as it is the want of a proper independence in acting up to what is really best for them, as they themselves will acknowledge."

"If everybody would act as you talk, mother—if everybody would only think so!"

"If only we ourselves will, George! Our first and great duty is to act reasonably ourselves. The least we can do towards setting the world right, is to act right ourselves."

"Mother is the person!" cried Jemmie, who had been a most attentive listener. "Mother is right!"

"Yes, mother is right," acknowledged George, "and if everybody thought so too, there would be some sense in it." Poor George! "Everybody," in the shape of "what people will say," has ever been his bugbear—too often turning him a great many points from the path of his true interest.

Before the evening closed, it was unanimously decided that I should go and offer myself to Mrs. Friendly, as the nursery-maid of her children. Then we each re-

peated a verse of Scripture, when our mother commended us to the throne of mercy, praying that whatever might be the scene of our earthly labours, we might spend our strength in the service of our Divine Master, and finally, through his rich grace, enter into his kingdom. With a "Good night," George and I left her. Jemmie, the sick boy, slept with his mother.

As I put my arms around Mary, a sigh would come unbidden, at the prospect of leaving her. I felt that I should love the little Friendly children for her sake.

When Monday morning came, I wished mother would go and get the place for me. I shrank from an interview with the strange lady.

"I would willingly go for you, my child," said she, "but I want you early to learn to transact business for yourself; and now—while you are young, and while I am yet with you to give you counsel and sympathy—is your time to accustom yourself to business—to learn to go forward, and think and act and bargain for yourself. It must all come, and it is better to come early. Women are usually so deficient in these matters—in matters of fact, I mean."

So spake our mother. A blessing on her counsels!

Dressed in my best (a green calico, which the sun would fade, despite the most careful wearing), I sallied forth on this new mission; along on my way, seeking to gird myself for the interview.

Reaching the house where she boarded, I inquired for Mrs. Friendly.

"She is out," was the answer, "but will be in soon."

I longed to ask who took care of the children. A noise

attracted me as I ran down the steps, and looking up, bright curly-headed little girl was chirping at the window.

"I am sure if that is one of the little Friendlys shall love her dearly. It will not be a hard task, if she is as good as she is pretty," and my heart warmed in prospect of the new occupation. After walking farther and taking a turn round the corner, I again called.

Mrs. Friendly was still absent. Just as I was leaving the door, however, Mrs. Gordon came out.

"Ah, Jane, is this you, my dear? Did you wish to see Mrs. Friendly? She will be at home soon."

"I will tell my errand to Mrs. Gordon," thought I. Perhaps this will open the way.

"I wanted to see," said I, faintly and timidly, "Mrs. Friendly would hire me to come and take care of her children. I find I must do something this summer."

"You are a good child," said the lady, looking at me affectionately, "to wish to try and help your mother;—a good child, Jane. I am always glad to see a spirit like this. But, my dear, I am sorry to tell you that a girl came from her sister's in —, on Saturday night, and she came to live all summer with her.

"Never mind, Jane," she added, on beholding my disappointment, for I think a tear came into my eye; "never mind! You will get something else to do. There are more ways than one to help your mother."

"But I wanted to earn something to go to school with—"

"Did you, Jane? I wish from my heart you were with Cornelia this moment. I am sorry, my dear! It seems

as if some way could be devised for your going to Derry. You ought to go, I am sure. We will think of it."

Her kind and friendly manner—a manner peculiar to Mrs. Gordon—softened in some degree the pang of the disappointment. "And I am sure," thought I, "it is very evident that she, so rich a lady as she is, does not think any the less of me for trying to earn something even by 'living out.' Mother is right, that is plain."

Mrs. Gordon, or the sweet June air, quite revived my spirits, and I returned home with a lighter heart than could have been expected. The sky, the trees, and the green wayside reflected their images of beauty into my soul, and I rejoiced in them, notwithstanding an early introduction into the struggles of life. But fairly in the little back kitchen, where my mother sat by her huge basket of work, a keen sense of disappointment came over me, and I sat down and wept in good earnest.

"You must abide your time, my child," spake she softly.

"How did you succeed?" "What success?" "Are you going, Jane?" cried George, and Jemmie, and Mary, as each successively came in and wanted to hear all about it. I gave a minute account.

"Well, I am sorry!" exclaimed George, when the short recital was ended.

We were all quite amazed.

"Yes, I am sorry; for the more I think of all mother said, the more true it seems; and then Mrs. Gordon praised Jane for it!"

Ah, that was the secret! Mrs. Gordon was one of George's everybodies.

"It is not to be," said Jemmie.

"Oh, I am so glad!" and Mary clapped her hands and skipped about gladly.

"Now I think," said George, looking very wise, "that Mrs. Gordon will plan some way for your going to Derry. Let us see. She said she wished you were with Cornelia. She said we will think of it. She added, if some way could not be thought of. Mrs. Gordon is rich, and she would not feel it to put her hand in her pocket and send Jane to Derry herself. Mother, was it not a hint for Jane to tell her what she wanted? It was a hint, mother? I think we shall hear more of it." And as he looked around upon us all, his sparkling eyes and radiant face bespoke his own deep interest and sanguine hopes, as much as his words betrayed ignorance of the great world on whose threshold he as yet stood.

My mother looked at the ardent boy smilingly, and then gravely said, "Do not flatter Jane with hopes which will never be realized, George."

"Why, mother, it would be so easy for her just to put her thumb and finger into her purse, and then—out comes the money!" suiting the action to the word.

"I do really believe she will!" cried Jemmie; "Jane wants to go so."

"You will soon learn, my children, that people are not quite so disinterested as you think; neither must you build any hopes upon what you fancy people might do for you. Your only sure dependence, George and Jane, must be upon your own honest hearts and industrious hands, with the blessing of God," and she resumed her sewing.

"Well, mother, they might if they chose to do it.

Rich people might do a great deal more good with their money than they do!" exclaimed George.

"That point you cannot undertake to decide until you know more facts in the case than you know now, George. It is easier to find fault with others, than it is to live right ourselves."

I confess I leaned very much to George's suggestions, and could not help thinking that Mrs. Gordon's words meant something; yes, and that something would grow out of them.

Several days passed in a state of pleasing suspense. A little hope glimmered—very little—yet enough to encourage an ardent temperament, with small experience of the world. I now know that kind words and friendly intimations are more intended to encourage our own efforts, than to lead us to lean upon the arm of others.

Many days more passed, and nothing from Mrs. Gordon. Neither did she ever dream how much (for a season) were my first morning thoughts, and my last waking thoughts at night, turned towards her in silent entreaty.

Now indeed, I thought, I must patiently wait, realizing what my mother often said, "That it needs as much resolution to bear disappointments as it does to make efforts," and return to the

"Band, gusset, and seam,"

with many a longing, lingering look towards the schools from which I seemed to be shut out.

Eight months passed away, and I was verging towards fifteen. Meanwhile the girls from Derry came home on

of the education of show. The women of our age and country want that which will enable them to think and act with vigour and ability, in their proper sphere. To live, and to live right, is to toil, to struggle, to press forward amid obstacles. We have a warfare to accomplish, a victory to gain, over the world, the flesh and the devil. Grace is promised us, and it is our part to be watchful, prayerful and faithful unto death, when we shall receive a crown of glory, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give us in that day; and not to us only, but to all that love his appearing.

Monday morning came. I was at the school-house early, and found Tim already there! He was crest-fallen. Taking my seat, I could see he was restless and uneasy, shuffling hither and thither; until, at length, he marched hurriedly up to the desk and handed me a paper; then he stood a little backward, with his eyes upon the ground.

I opened and read it. It was a full confession of his faults, asking forgiveness, and promising amendment.

"Father says I must read this out loud before the school!" said Tim, in a husky voice.

The event was all I could desire. Fortified by parental authority, Tim gave me little trouble afterward. I could forgive a few freaks in his first attempts to steady himself in the path of well-doing.

Left much alone, away from the peculiar sympathies and interests which filled up almost every hour while at home, much time was left on my hands for reflection. My mother's intense interest for the spiritual good of her children, and her almost agonizing desire to behold

them with their affections and interests devoted to the service of their gracious Lord and Master, came forcibly home to me. Her instruction and her prayers returned upon my soul with more power than when she first uttered them in my ear.

I felt there was a great work before me. The claims of my Creator and Redeemer upon me were not to be set aside nor trifled with. The tenor of all her letters was to urge me to this service in the spring of my youth, that my best days might be given to my best Friend. In answer to a passage in one of my letters, in which I intimated that I could not change my own heart, and what then could I do? she wrote thus:—

“No, my child, you cannot, indeed, change your own heart. That is the work of the Holy Spirit; but you can break up the fallow ground, and open your heart to receive him. You can ask, seek, call, knock. That is your work—a work which you only can do, and which you must sometime do, if you expect ever to find salvation. And that is the work, I pray you, to begin now—now, before the cares and the deceitfulness of the world shall choke your heart, and render it altogether barren and unfruitful. You say you cannot help thinking of the subject,—that you are sad and oppressed, and wish the burden removed. Happy is it that you feel thus; my child. God has disturbed your security, in order that you may find peace in believing. Never give up the subject until you do find it. Strive, agonize in prayer, that he would lift the vail from your eyes, so that you may behold his beauty—that you may be able to cast your burden at his feet—that by faith you may give up to him your whole heart, and cordially unite your interests with

his. This is the first step in the formation of your religious character, and of vital importance, because the **FIRST**.

"I trust my dear child knows what are some of the duties of a Christian life. May she soon exercise herself therein, with diligence and godly fear. Now, Jane, now is the only time you are sure of. Act as for your life, for is not eternal life the prize?"

I received the letter containing this paragraph, at a moment when it went sorely to my conscience.

The people of the district, and of the place where I worshipped, were of a denomination different from the one in which I had been educated; yet was their piety sincere and unaffected, and their minister a truly godly man. He obeyed the apostolic injunction, being instant in season and out of season, for the good of souls committed to his charge. Though it was toward the harvest when the husbandman was most busy in his field, and the women in their dairies, a great seriousness spread itself over a portion of his flock, and several were inquiring the way of life. A meeting for religious conversation and instruction had been appointed, one evening at my little black school-house. All the neighbourhood around attended, old and young, though especially designed for the youth.

Every singer, bearing a tallow candle and an iron candlestick, with his tune-book, might have been seen as the darkness gathered, issuing from lanes and paths here and there, and going in the direction of the school house.

"Are you going, ma'am?" had asked one and another. The schoolmistress evaded the question, and answered ambiguously. A conflict was going on in her bosom

the claims of God on one side, and the secret disinclination of a sinful heart on the other. She knew her duty, but was averse to it. When she heard of the appointment, conscience instantly urged her going, bidding her use every means in her power to awaken and to influence her on a subject so deeply important.

The voice of the tempter came, with curious and artful insinuations.

"These people are not your people," he said. "They want to proselytize you.

"You are the school-mistress, and everybody will be watching you and talking about it.

"There is time enough; no haste is necessary. Wait for a more convenient season. You can be just as good in your own bed-room.

"What is the use of going to the meeting to-night? You are tired!"

She did not know then how good and blessed a thing it is to meet with the people of God. She listened to the tempter; and though good Mr. Green entreated, "Do go with us to the house of prayer!" and looked grieved as she coldly answered "*No*," she saw him and Uncle Jerry and Mary hasten down the road, leaving her in no enviable frame of mind.

Ah, no, I was ill at ease. No sooner had their forms faded away in the twilight, than I flew to my bedroom, and bolted the door. Sitting down by the open window, I looked out upon the fields, and trees, and skies, dimly discerned, but not less suggestive of grave and solemn thoughts of God. Even the deep and mysterious hum of insects reminded me of the presence of God. A sense of his omniscience and omnipotence came over me, and

his eye seemed to be searching my inmost soul. I felt that I could not bear the inspection. I wanted, like one of old, to go away and hide myself. I was guilty and vile in his sight, and felt an abhorrence of myself.

What should I do? What *could* I do? I wanted to be released from the bondage of sin. I longed for the peace and light and strength which a believing knowledge of Christ could alone impart; and yet I knew not how to get it.

I was groping darkly about. Was it not then my duty to seize hold of any means that could shed light upon my difficulties? Should I not put myself in the attitude to receive instruction? Had not the father of my spirit opened to me a way to receive the instruction I then needed, at the little black school-house that very evening? Had I not turned my back proudly upon it? What would my mother say? Oh, that she were near to guide and counsel me! Turn which way I would, I was wretched. I could not pray. I hated to think. I flung myself on the bed in a forced indifference, nor did I move, or stir, or know how time passed, until the strain,—

“Rock of Ages, cleft for me!”

in a well-known tune, oftentimes sung at home, broke upon my ear from the kitchen. It was Mr. Green. There seemed a peculiar sweetness in the singing, as if it gushed from the heart with a kind of joyful appreciation.

I repeated aloud the first two lines, and tried to feel them. I recited the entire hymn, turning portions of it into prayer.

It was a night of conflict, and the dawn was not yet.

My mother's letter came two days afterward. It was not calculated to allay my apprehensions, or quiet my conscience. The more I reflected, the more important appeared immediate decision upon the subject. I felt that it must not be put off; but my views were dark and clouded. I wanted the instruction which Christian experience could alone give me. Where was it to be obtained? I had neglected it when an opportunity offered directly suited to my case, and now what was to be done?

"Do something. Do not give up!" I seemed to hear my mother say, again and again.

Sabbath came, but gave me little relief. On Monday, one of my scholars came up to me, and after some embarrassment and hesitation, said:

"Ma'am, the minister is going to have a meeting at grandmother's to-night. Mother wants to know if you would not like to come?"

I looked up at the child.

"Yes, I will come, Margaret," I answered quickly.

Ought I not, at a time like that, to avail myself of every opportunity to be instructed? My conscience responded, Yes. Many a soul has been lost for want of promptness and decision at the right moment—at the time when God's spirit is awakening the conscience; when the motives and claims of the gospel are, by divine grace, seen in something of their true light, and when the importance of choosing, **THIS DAY**, whom we will serve, comes upon us like an awful reality. It is dangerous to trifle at such a period. The example of Felix is for our warning.

"Yes, I must go," I thought; "I want more instruc-

tion, and I must use every means in my power to get it. I must do it now."

Margaret's grandmother's house was distant, and the night was dark. I could take a lantern. Then I thought of asking Mr. Green to accompany me; it would afford me an opportunity of speaking to him upon the great subject agitating my heart. But the difficulty was in asking him. How long I stood with my hand on the latch, doubting, deliberating, ashamed to ask him, and yet afraid not to ask him!

"Go forward!" said something within me.

Then I went out towards the barn to find him, but he was not to be seen, and I was near giving up again, and returning into the house. But passing by the wood-pile, there was Mr. Green sharpening a saw. My request was made.

"I will go, and be thankful to go," answered the good man.

At the appointed hour, we went together to Margaret's grandmother's house. That evening I shall never forget—that dark, warm evening in August. It was the starting-point of my religious history. A detail of all that occurred I need not give. Suffice it to say, that I was amply rewarded for the step taken.

Mr. Green's conversation resolved most of my doubts, and cleared up many perplexities. As he went along, I felt that I could speak to him unreservedly, and from him I received all the needed guidance which it was my object to secure at the grandmother's. Though an humble and unlearned man, he was "mighty in the Scriptures," and clear in his religious experience; and he, among many others, was a striking example of what

the Bible can do for a man intellectually, as well as morally. His tone of thought and conversation was striking and elevated—the result, not of education, but of a deep and constant study of his Bible. I sometimes think I have never met one since, whose teaching to a young inquirer was more clear and convincing, more pungent and direct. The weeks spent beneath his roof were in a truly refined and Christian atmosphere; his prayers were as if he met his Maker face to face; his daily life like one intimate with Christ.

Mr. Green has long since been numbered with the dead. The world is better for his having lived in it.

Many, many times have I thanked God for the decision of that night. If promptness and resolution are needed in the business of life, just as much, if not more, are they needed in business pertaining to the concerns of the soul. Now I felt the value of my mother's training. She had taught me the importance of doing, and doing myself; and even in this matter, I was unable to get away from the force of her reasonings and old habits formed beneath her eye. It is frequently hard to act, and act for and by one's self; but the indecision and tardiness of action which often render right conclusions and fine principles good for nothing, really bring a thousand more snares and obstacles and evils around your path, and harass your mind a thousand-fold more than straightforward, resolute pursuit of duty will ever do. Try it, and see.

According to the engagement with Mr. Sykes, I taught twelve weeks, and received eighteen dollars. When three months expired, several families desired me to tarry six weeks longer, and keep a private school, for

which they allowed me a dollar a week and my board. It was a very small school, but a very pleasant one.

At the close of my whole residence in the district, my earnings amounted to twenty-four dollars. Twenty-four dollars ! I had never seen, much less had I ever handled, so large a sum ; and it was mine, fairly and honestly mine ! I felt amply repaid for every hot day's toil in the little, black, sunny school-house.

It would carry me through six months board at Derry. If money is valuable in proportion to what it can accomplish for us, how great was the value of this four-and-twenty dollars to me ?

On a bright September morning, in the golden season of harvest, Elisha Sykes drove up in his green waggon to take me home again. I did not then know all the good I had gained in that summer among the woods. I did not then know how much richer I went back to my mother, in good things more substantial and enduring than money. At no period was I more thoroughly educating myself for the great duties of maturer life. The arms and equipments and furnishing given me at home were then tested, to see how useful they were in fitting me for the duties and emergencies of every-day duty, I was at work, and there is nothing like working to enable us to find our true position in the world.

As I rode by the black school-house, there was a sorrowful and yet joyful adieu in the last look I gave it. The last ! I have never seen it since.

CHAPTER VI.

AT SCHOOL.

NEVER were twenty-four dollars husbanded like mine. Though my brown hood was very brown, and the sleeves of my Scotch plaid pelisse extremely short, notwithstanding the eking out of a cuff, and the application of an old strip of chinchilla—they were to be worn another winter. To buy new clothes was not to be thought of. There must be no breaking in upon the treasured sum. During the winter, my mother gave me what I could earn with my needle to supply me with new spring clothes and suitable books for study.

As spring advanced, I looked forward with animation to school pursuits. But there were important preliminaries to settle. Could I board for a dollar a week, as Sarah May said could be done a mile's walk from the school? Cornelia doubted it; she gave two dollars. And then the tuition. Could I get a place upon the charity fund? Mr. Hale promised my mother to intercede for me, but he had left town without thinking of it, not to return for many weeks.

"After all, Jane," she said, beholding my anxiety, "it is better, if possible, to do all you can yourself. Other people's hands are full, and we must not expect too much from them. Write yourself to Mrs. B——, and ascertain what you can depend upon; tell her exactly your circumstances."

"You write, mother!"

She looked at me and smiled.

"Nay, my dear," said she, "I want you to learn to do such things. Write to Mrs. B—— just what your situation is, and what you want at her school. Write as if you were talking to me—briefly and simply. I will read your letter, and see if it answers the purpose."

Thus encouraged, I sat down to try. It was a day or two before I was satisfied with the production; nor was I then, but mother should see it. With two additions and a subtraction, she thought it would do. I carried the letter and put it in the office with deeper solicitude, but more calmness, than characterized the proceedings of the Green Lane note. Indeed, I was growing business-like, "learning to labour and to wait." It was not many days—it was even before an answer was expected, that George bounded into the house with a letter in his hands.

"That is what I like," exclaimed he. "Now Jane will not have to wait, wait, wait every day. She is a business woman, mother, you may depend upon it."

"Mother, you open it!" I said, tremblingly.

"No, my child, calm yourself, and read it to us," she said, passing it from George.

On breaking the seal, I paused a moment.

"Is it a good or bad omen, coming so soon, George?"

"Good! Good! Think everything is good until you know to the contrary. Come, dash into it, Jane," he exclaimed, brightly.

"George has the true philosophy," said my mother.

The letter was opened and read, proving highly satisfactory to the group most interested in its contents. Board could be obtained for a dollar, and, if willing, I could earn my tuition by sweeping, or in other work pertaining to the buildings of the institution.

"There is nothing like trying, mother, is there?" I cried, joyfully. "Then I am really going to Derry—really going!"

Though my preparations were simple enough, yet the event was so great that it seemed like fitting out an expedition to California.

Cornelia seemed glad when I communicated the delightful fact to her; but less glad than I expected, and less glad, perhaps, than she would have been two years before.

"Oh, you will be so far behind us all!" she said. "If you had only gone in the first place, you could have 'finished' with us, this summer or the next!"

"But you know I could not go then."

"I do not see why you could not as well as now," she answered, carelessly. And indeed Cornelia could never be persuaded that whatever was wanted might not be done as well at one time as another. Her wishes were gratified, and she could see no reason why others' should not be. There are many Cornelias in the world.

Again the season of departure arrived, and our village sent its spring delegation to the school at Derry—Cornelia, the Mays, and two other girls and myself. It was a dull, rainy day, a day that saddened the departure of some of us, even unto tears; but I was buoyed up to womanly firmness by a keen relish for the duties before me, and of their importance, consequent upon the exertions already made to attain them.

New faces, new duties, new interests, new associations, were before me.

CHAPTER VII.

SCHOOL DAYS.

STUDIES, a long walk too and from school, the care of some of the academy rooms, so fully occupied my time, that I saw little of my old companions. Indeed, there was little time to think of anything but our regular succession of duties. So systematic was every arrangement, so prompt was every teacher, that any remissness or procrastination on the part of a pupil was immediately noticed and marked ; and so strong was popular opinion on the side of good order, that no one, possessing any self-respect, ever wished to come under censure in these points. There was an earnestness and promptitude in obeying the requirements of school which I had never before seen, and which I now think had an important bearing in the formation of character under Miss ——'s care. Sometimes it came strangely over me, that a stranger in school as I was, since the first day, neither Cornelia nor the Mays seemed to take notice of me. True, there were a hundred and twenty scholars, and we were in different classes. How then could we see much of each other ?

Three weeks passed, and behold a letter from mother and George and Mary ! A delightful home letter, full of news and good advice ! It was with some difficulty that I could steady my mind for the next recitation.

I longed to tell Cornelia, and repeat to her several little items of the village news. When school closed, she was not to be found. While the girls were dispers-

ing I read it over again, and never letter seemed so interesting. I was in the midst of sweeping the large school-room, when, with two or three others coming down stairs, I saw Cornelia, hanging on the arm of one whom the girls called "the heiress."

"Oh! Cornelia," I cried, throwing down the broom, "I have got a letter from home!"

"Indeed!" she answered coldly, passing on.

"What did that girl tell it to you for?" asked her companion, haughtily. "Eugh! this shocking dust!"

"Poor thing! I suppose she takes a fancy to me," whispered Cornelia, in a low tone, but not so low that it did not reach my ear. They went out at the door.

The difference in our position flashed upon me! I was a sweeper.

For an instant I was indignant. Then, wounded and disappointed, I sat down upon a bench; then kicked away the broom with my foot. My right hand went into my pocket, clasping the letter.

"She, who knows me so well! She—" I strove to feel right. My eye fell on the neglected broom. "She may look down upon me; but after all, what matters it? But let me not despise my poor broom," repentant thoughts coming thick and fast, "for it is my broom that gives me my tuition, after all. I might not have been here, with all my twenty-four dollars, if it were not for this! If the other girls do not sweep, I do, and I am glad of it. Mother says, if we expect to get any great good in this life, we must labour for it. Cornelia and I are in different situations, and I must be content to bear with the circumstances which will arise out of this difference. Mother always says I can bear it," and covering

my eyes, I breathed a silent prayer for a meek and forgiving spirit.

Again reading over that portion of the letter, written by my mother, I arose to finish the work.

This incident was a key to some other mysterious signs of coolness, which I did not before understand, in Cornelia's manner. But it did not depress nor discourage me, and I could forgive it; but I could not so easily forget it. It hung like a cobweb about me, for many days. Cornelia and I had so often played together, and once we used to sit, side by side, at school; but we were children then, and had not learned the distinctions which wealth makes, even at school!

"Never think of slights a moment, unless they are caused by your own misconduct," mother says. "It is no matter what people may happen to think of us, provided we act our parts well." But then it would be so pleasant to talk over things with Cornelia! So pleasant! Ah, well, "it is not for pleasant things alone that we live," mother says; "it is to do, with all our might, what is before us to do. Our heavenly Father gave us the work." And the subject was soon effectually banished by a resolute adherence to that work. Indeed, I was surprised to find myself so tranquil at any remembrance of it. After all, does not half of the unhappiness of life grow out of jealousies and slights and envyings, which a hearty and resolute attention to the work before us (and everybody has a work to do, whether he thinks so or not) would put to flight, and spread a blue sky over the heart?

Having been placed in classes somewhat more advanced

than myself, double diligence was necessary to maintain a desirable position among my mates. I began to feel hurried. An almost fevered interest took possession of me, urging me forward in every school-duty, while other duties (quite as important in their place) were apt to be carelessly discharged, or altogether neglected. Evening devotions were prone to be put off until drowsiness compelled me to leave my studies, rendering me as unfit for prayer as for study. My first waking thoughts more frequently alighted upon an equation in algebra, or a difficult sum in arithmetic, than upon "mercies renewed every morning and fresh every evening." Not having yet united with the people of God, (for it was not then so common for youth to join themselves to the visible church as it is now,) I still trusted I was a child of God; and during the winter I had enjoyed great comfort in the discharge of religious duty, and from the conversation and prayers of my mother. For several weeks, all the importance of punctuality in private devotion was deeply felt. My mother's letters often warned me against the temptation of setting it aside, or crowding it away from its proper season, by other occupations and interests. By and by, I began to read my Bible less seriously; then, perhaps, a verse or two, with the mind so much upon other things, that I could scarcely tell their import. Then followed hasty and wandering prayer, with thoughts running hither and thither. I could not fix them. I could not feel what I needed nor what I asked. Then the hasty arrangement of my chamber,—“I will weep to-morrow,” or, “I will dust it to-morrow.” Books were in disorder. I could find neither comb nor pocket-handkerchief. Nothing was in place, and conse-

quently nothing at hand. I spent much time, when every moment was precious, in seeking about for the commonest article; and this was to me more annoying and perplexing, because at home everything was perfectly regulated, and we had been trained to have a place for everything, and, what is more difficult, to keep everything in its place.

"It will save so much time," my mother used to say, "and economy of time is quite as important as economy of money."

The consequence was, I was in a perpetual hurry, worried, and irritated, and astonished and ashamed of my irritation. There was a weight upon my spirits, and I could not feel any cheerful alacrity in anything, even in my studies.

One Wednesday morning I awoke suddenly, with the impression that I had overslept myself. Jumping quickly up, and seizing my book, I sat down at an open window facing the east, where the morning had dawned sufficiently to see to read. Not half awake, I strove to study. I read the page over and over again, yet it did not appear to convey any meaning. I could get no hold of it. I could not remember it.

"But I must stick to it."

Half-dressed, uncombed, and unwashed, there I sat.

! The breakfast bell startled me.

"Half-past six, and nothing accomplished!" I cried in despair, looking at myself, my bed, my books, and my room, and the little pocket Bible on the floor under the table. Never had my room exhibited a spectacle like that! My conscience reproached me. When would everything be in order again? All the good habits which

I had been violating came up to shame me. What would my mother say ?

I think I never looked around so bewildered and mortified, though alone, and none near me to reprove. Making a hasty toilet, I went to a late breakfast, and then how little time to finish what was before me, and be ready for school at half-past eight!

"All this comes from giving undue time and attention to one duty at the expense of others," I said bitterly, on again surveying my disordered apartment. "How much mother used to caution us against it; but I am sure I never realized it until now."

What was to be done first ? I took up my Bible and tried to read, but where was the quiet of mind necessary to a due reflection upon what I read ? I could not stop.

Then a tramping of feet upon the stairs, and two or three knocks at the door.

"Oh, the girls !" I exclaimed testily, running to hide this thing and that.

Opening the door, they cried, "Have you decided to go upon the expedition this afternoon ? Do, Jane, decide to go. We have walked over here on purpose to persuade you," and their bright faces glowed with animation.

"Oh, it is almost time for school ! I suspect you have overslept yourself !" exclaimed one, gazing good-humouredly around. I was in no mood to hear anything.

"No, I am not going this afternoon. I thought the girls understood me so. It costs more than I can afford, and I am not going," I answered, standing with my hand on the latch, and never asking them to sit down.

"Oh, we shall have such a pleasant day ; and, dear

Jane, you look this minute as if you needed a drive," affectionately putting her arm round me. At any other time her kindness would have been pleasant; but, as it was, I shrank away, saying,—

"Indeed, I cannot go! You can all afford it, I cannot!"

The girls soon left, and then how my incivility troubled me.

"Oh!" I sighed, in an ocean of trouble.

The forenoon passed. Hard pushed and restless, I made total failures in two recitations. The first I had made; and I was wretched enough.

While at dinner, a little note was handed me, from a boy at the door. It contained an invitation from some of my class-fellows to accompany them in an excursion that afternoon, to a beautiful pond ten or twelve miles distant, signed by her who had so affectionately urged my going in the morning.

The different classes, under the care of a teacher, not unfrequently used to club together, and hire a stage-coach to drive out to some of the delightful places around, and spend the afternoon. The present was such an occasion. Their kindness, so undeserved, touched my heart.

"Go! certainly, go! It will do you a world of good," urged Mrs. Bond.

"I will go to get away from myself," I cried, inwardly. An acceptance was sent. Then I ran up stairs to hasten preparations.

"Clean stockings! clean stockings!" I hunted around after a pair of clean stockings.

One pair;—unmended! Another pair; another pair;—both unmended! Alas, should it be confessed?

I cowered before these unmended stockings with shame and sorrow. I blushed in their presence, at what my mother would have considered an unpardonable neglect. I felt that I had lost ground; that I was far, far behind my plain duty.

"What! is not this too bad! Holes at both elbows, as well as holes in both stockings!" I exclaimed bitterly, sinking down into a seat, and covering my face with both hands. How long I sat I knew not; but I arose, and finding paper and pencil, wrote a note, at the risk of being considered fickle, or anything else which the girls chose to consider me. My mind was made up not to go. "I see how it is," thinking as I went about my chamber; "in the ardent pursuit of one thing, everything else has been neglected. I have broken link after link in the chain of duty, and what disorder comes of it! What crowding, and trouble, and perplexity!" And I am sure I never realized before what sore disadvantages arise from pushing one duty out of its appropriate place. At home we had always done everything in its time, and the consequence was, there was time for everything.

"I must stop now and resolutely examine my chamber. I will not fly away from its evils, for then I must only come home and meet them again, and not a jot will be gained. Matters would be worse by to-morrow. I must stop, and never give up until matters are righted once more, until I retrace all my hurried steps, and start where I was a week ago."

"It is a beautiful afternoon," as the summer wind came softly into the window, where I lingered a moment, and where I soon espied the coach driving towards the house, notwithstanding the note.

"You do not often get such an invitation! Go! It is a sign you ought to go, that the coach is coming in spite of your note! Go!" So said temptation.

"No! No! No! It is but a small matter whether I enjoy an afternoon's pleasure or not; but it is a very great matter whether, when I find things going wrong, I have resolution and firmness enough to stop and look at them, and try to get right again. 'Never fly from perplexities,' mother says. 'Meet them, and thread your way through them, like a true woman.'"

"Your troubles do not amount to much, after all! Little affairs, just in your chamber. Nobody knows it, or will think the less of you. Go! Enjoy a few hours' amusement. It will all be the same a hundred years hence! Go!" continued temptation, while the carriage stopped, and several voices cried joyfully,

"Come, come! Jane Hudson, I am so glad you are going! Be quick! We shall have such a delightful excursion! So they all exclaimed, even before I could re-affirm the decision of the note.

"Nonsense!" they cried. "You can go just as well as not. Besides, Miss B—— says you look as if you needed the fresh air. She wants you to go! Come! Come!"

I shook my head and left the window. Mrs. Bond ran up stairs to see into the matter.

"Not going!" she exclaimed. "My dear Miss Hudson, you will study yourself to death. You have looked so pale for a week."

I begged that she would suffer me to decide according to my own judgment; and to assure the girls that, although I thanked them for their kindness, and under

other circumstances might have enjoyed the drive, yet, as it was I could not go.

"It is not hard study that makes me pale," I said, as Mrs. Bond departed; "for I have exercise enough. It is for the want of a serene and tranquil mind," shutting the door after her. "Perhaps these are little matters, all in my own chamber—perhaps they are—but then they are the matters which help to discover and to form our characters, and so, are all-important to us. Mother says there is a right and there is a wrong, and I am sure it can never be the same to go right and to go wrong." I looked wistfully at the departing carriage, on that beautiful summer afternoon, but I never flinched!

Sometimes I have considered this as one among the most important decisions of my life. The time and attention of woman, in her proper sphere—the home sphere—are necessarily employed upon a great multitude of humble duties and little obligations—little, I mean apart, yet vast in the aggregate—but which are the more apt to get deranged on this very account. Hence it is to be feared they too often and too easily get out of place. Undone or ill-done duties accumulating upon her hands, produce confusion and vexation in her whole household. Who has not seen wives and daughters and mothers perplexed and anxious and half-sinking on this account, and knowing scarcely why or how all these difficulties arise? Let the courage and firmness exercised in other matters come to her aid here. Do not attempt to fly from them. Do not imagine matters will go smoothly by and by, without any effort on your part to produce it. It is not so. True, you may at length settle down in the conclusion to let things take their course; but you will

be neither comfortable nor happy yourself, nor will you make comfortable or happy these around you. You must stop and know what link or links you have lost in the chain. You must face the results of neglected duty; firmly and patiently retrace your steps and set things right again. Give yourself no rest, and suffer yourself to engage in no pleasure, until they are righted. While it is unquestionably best never to go wrong, it is unquestionably better to stop when you fear you are wrong, and apply an immediate remedy to the evils about you, than to suffer them to accumulate. How many household disorders might be checked in the beginning, in this way, and tranquillity restored!

It must be confessed the afternoon was not a very happy one, at least no further happy than in the hope of getting on the right track again. How busy I was! Trunk, drawers, and table, were thoroughly ransacked and put in order,—all my books and work rearranged.

“Holes at both elbows!” I inwardly ejaculated every now and then. “Holes at both elbows, indeed! I may be a very good scholar, but what does that signify if I do not take care of my clothes, and keep my chamber with neatness and propriety! Good scholarship cannot sew, or sweep, or patch, or cook, or keep home in good order. These are among my appropriate duties, come what will, mother says, and these it would be a shame for me to neglect! My main business now is study, I know, but not to the slighting of a single other daily duty. There is time for everything, mother always said.”

But while our chamber-neglects can be repaired, it is not so easy to make up for the neglect of closet-duties.

My experience of this was bitter, and I can feelingly counsel others to beware, above all things, how they trifle with their religious habits. There are great temptations surrounding the path of the godly student, whether girl or boy, even in the retirement of the chamber; and they are the greater, because they steal over us unawares, and are not accounted temptations. In the ardent pursuit of knowledge, (a pursuit in itself excellent and desirable,) absorbing the time not unfrequently from early morning till late at night, the hour for private devotions is oftentimes imperceptibly encroached upon, or attended upon with thoughts and affections too jaded and too pre-occupied to receive much benefit from them. Thus it may go on, day after day, and week after week, the student all the while less watchful of himself, because he feels himself safe in the seclusion of his study, apart from the ordinary temptations of the world, until he at last finds himself growing irritable and anxious, pressed by a heavy weight upon his spirits, destitute of the light and warmth which a genuine religious experience always gives to the soul; with little relish for his Bible and for prayer, and wandering far, very far from his Saviour. Mournful state! Do you now fly to your studies with increasing avidity, for refuge and comfort? Alas, you will find that they cannot give you the peace for which you sigh, and you wonder why they perplex and harass you more than formerly—why you are dispirited and pushed as for your life. You wonder why the zest has gone.

To every school-girl, then, who is trying to live in obedience to her Saviour, and who hopes she has taken the first steps in a religious life, let me address a caution

Beware of suffering your studies to encroach upon the hour allotted to reading your Bible, to reflection and to prayer. Do not wait until you are asleep over your algebra, before you put it aside and take up your Bible. Do not hurry carelessly over your morning prayer, lest there should not be time enough for your philosophy. There is time enough for everything necessary to be done. There must be time for you to seek the favour and forgiveness of your heavenly Father. Depend upon it, all the firmness and punctuality so necessary for the exercises of the school-room, and for the suitable arrangements of your chamber, are at least just as necessary in your strictly religious duties. You can never study to the best advantage, until your mind has been tranquillized and invigorated by earnest and believing prayer. You are never so well prepared for vigorous progress, as when living habitually under the truth, "Thou God seest me." Try it and see. Strive early every morning to impress upon your mind, and ask God to impress it by his Spirit, the great truth contained in those four little words; "Thou God seest me." Believe me, it will give you a quiet though unconquerable energy in the discharge of every duty, such as no motives drawn from this life can give you. The time spent in contemplating it is not lost. You will study all the better for it. It will make you less distracted and anxious. It will make you more steady, true, and calm. And so of any great religious truth. Every morning, clear and prepare your mind for the day's duty, by reflections like these. You will need it for the growth of your Christian character, especially while occupied as much as you are by the study of physical truths.

If you find that you are losing ground in your religious hopes and enjoyments, that your habits to-day are not so exemplary as they were two days, or a week, or two weeks, or months ago, STOP, just where you are! STOP, and ask why it is so? STOP, and, if possible, retrace your steps. STOP, and get right again. Humble and repentant, go again to Jesus. It will perhaps be painful and difficult, but let every young Christian do it. Patiently, firmly, and with a whole heart, do it, remembering always that life has failed of its great purpose, if it is not animated by that holy energy which springs from a living faith in the truths of the gospel.

The next day witnessed me in the retirement of my chamber, and when I again went forth, it was with an experience never to be forgotten.

In two years I left school in the same class with Cornelia Gordon and the Mays.

I will not say that I then "finished my education," for it was rather laying a deep and firm foundation for future improvement.

Miss B—— made friendly inquiries into my real circumstances, which being freely disclosed to her, she had offered her aid in meeting the expenses of my second year at school.

Soon after leaving Derry, an eligible situation as teacher quickly offered, through the kind recommendation of Miss B——, which, in a short time, enabled me to repay her timely assistance. Nor was it long before I enjoyed the privilege of sending Mary through the same course of study with this excellent friend, at the same institution.

Mother and Jemmie hardly knew how they could spare her, so bright and lively was she, and never away from the nest. But mother needed her less than she formerly did, and could well spare her a while; for we (George and I) were ever dropping something into mother's purse, so that she never uses her needle now, save as the "maker and mender" for her own household.

And the dear old homestead!

It is the dear old homestead always, and we shall always love it and cherish it as the spot where we passed a happy and industrious childhood, presided over by a mother to whose judicious management we feel that we owe all our present success and usefulness.

"Such a mother!" George says; "always putting us on our own hook, and, what is so difficult, making us hang on it!"

George is a young man now, a partner with his old master, and doing well, we may conclude, from the improvements he has wrought in the homestead.

I will not say how long it is since I left the school at Derry, but it is long enough to see the summing up of many lives, and the results of different principles carried out into action. In some respects they are important results.

The daily current of village news would often bring them up to view.

"Poor Mrs. Smith, how much she is to be pitied!"

"And those children, poor things, how they must be neglected!"

"I do not know what will become of her!"

"Do you know, she is very nervous? The most trifling things trouble her."

"Why, I am told she sits from morning till night in her rocking-chair. I should not think she let anything trouble her much."

"Property enough! Yes, to live very comfortably upon. At least, any one but she could. She! She is so inefficient!"

"And inexperienced!"

"And indolent! Why does she not arouse herself, and give her mind to her family? She has enough to occupy her."

"Why, remember how she was brought up, poor thing!"

"Well, I always had said so!"

"Only think of Mrs. Smith's coming back!"

Mrs. Smith come back!

Yes, a widow with four little children, but with sufficient to maintain them, if only husbanded with care and economy.

But who is Mrs. Smith?

I felt deeply interested in all I could glean of her, for she was no other than Cornelia Gordon. I had not seen her since her marriage, when she went away, with the world bright before her. Several changes had passed over her family since then.

Her father was no longer a rich man. Two older sons had managed, or mismanaged, to deprive him of the largest portion of his property. His wife was dead, and he had lived alone, a solitary old man, until the death of Cornelia's husband, when she came (with her four little ones, and a remnant of what was accounted a good fortune) to live with him.

Soon she sent a message for me to come and see I always loved Cornelia. Whether it was her nature, or her prettiness, or the nice things which mother used to bestow upon us from her back-door, or I used to race home with Cornelia; or whatever have been the cause, I had always felt some secret drawing of the heart toward her, and long after we had new homes far distant from each other, no early friend was so soon inquired for as Cornelia Gordon. Her present situation grieved me, and I gladly went to see

"Come often, very often, while you are in town," said, on parting at our first interview, "for I have great many things to say to you. I am quite desolate when you go by. I am sure it will do good. Oh, Jane, I am not fitted for such changes these!"

I thought her afflictions had improved her character; improved it more than could have been expected, and willingly availed myself of her invitation to go often to see her. Indeed, it was a source of secret satisfaction to me to perceive (as I thought I did) that she could be superior to her situation, in spite of the deficiencies of her early domestic education, and enter upon the duties before her with firmness and energy.

"I fear Cornelia will never be able to do it," said mother, who looked too comfortable and happy, kneeling away in her snug rocking-chair, to venture an unfavorable remark about anybody. "Afflictions, necessity, repentance, good resolutions, can do much for us, when we are old; but they can never supply entirely that kind and degree of moral hardihood, so important for the emergencies of life, which must be acquired

acquired at all, in the season and through the incidents of youth. It must grow with our growth, and strengthen with our strength. You will always find, my child, that those make the strong characters who have borne the yoke of discipline in their youth."

While all our mother said might be true, as a general rule, I secretly felt that Cornelia's case might be an exception.

Not many days after, I went in to sit a while with her one afternoon.

She was sitting in a rocking-chair, with a book in her hand, and traces of tears on her cheeks.

"You would not approve of this, I am sure," reaching one hand cordially out to me, and secreting the book behind her with the other. "But I read such books sometimes to make me forget my troubles. I have a world to think about and to do! I am perplexed sometimes beyond measure!" Some cloth lay uncut before her, with an old frock of little George's, and patterns and scissors.

"I feel that I ought to cut out some of the children's clothes," she said, taking up the cloth, "for economy's sake; but, dear Jane, I have no knack at it—I have no knack at any such things!"

"Patience and attention are sometimes better than a knack," I said, cheerfully.

"No, no!" and she shook her head despondingly. "I do not think so. I have been dreading this work until the poor child actually suffers for it. It is not in me to cut out."

"Nonsense, Cornelia, it is in anybody, with good hands, good sense, and good scissors! What is in the way?"

We examined together the old work, and then some new patterns. Then called George in, and tried his old jacket on, discovering where it needed a little taking in here and a little letting out there. And then it was not so very long before we called in George again to fit his new one on.

"Why, it fits admirably!" cried the mother. "Oh, if I only had your knack! You had it of old, Jane."

"No knack at all, Cornelia! We can do anything if we try. Have more confidence in yourself, Cornelia. We can do all that is allotted to us here," and away bounded little George again.

"Ah, no," she said despondingly, the tears coming into her eyes. "I have every day to leave so much undone that ought to be done. I am borne down with care."

"You have good help?"

"Pretty good. But," speaking more unreservedly than she had ever done before, "but father thinks I ought to try to do with only one person. You know I have no taste for housekeeping. There is so much to see to, so much to think of, so much that is perplexing and disagreeable in the kitchen—"

"And then, on the other hand, so much that may be clean and comfortable and tasty in the kitchen," I said, in a lively tone.

She smiled languidly.

"Ah, no, it is all a task!" And then folding her arms before her, she threw herself back in the chair, and began to rock.

"Come, Cornelia, let us finish George's jacket. If you will give me needle and thimble, we will sew to-

gether a while. Do you know there is nothing banishes the blues like work?" I tried to speak cheerfully.

"Work! work! No, I don't believe it. There is such a thing as too much work—perpetual work—an endless doing!" and she rocked away very resolutely: "and, Jane, I really do not feel adequate to all these cares."

"Your health is good, Cornelia—"

"Yes, pretty good—only a sinking and depression of spirits. The noise of the children is an excessive annoyance! I cannot bear it. I must hire a girl to keep them amused and out of the way,"—still rocking. "Indeed, every day I feel more and more my own inadequateness."

"You must arouse yourself, dear Cornelia. You must feel that you *are* adequate. I do not believe our heavenly Father ever lays more upon us than we can bear, nor more than is good for us, nor more than is necessary to call forth our capabilities. We naturally are so prone to shrink from exertion, that we need to be compelled to do so to develop ourselves."

"It is all fine, very fine," answered my companion, languidly, "it *sounds* beautifully. Mr. Smith used to talk in the same style. I have heard it all before. Sometimes I used to try and act upon it. Sometimes I would try to feel that burdens were not burdensome after all. But, Jane, it is of no use. I can, for an hour, or a half day, perhaps, hear all the children have to say, bind up sore fingers, darn old elbows and hunt up new shoe-strings; perhaps make a loaf of bread, or sweep the parlours. But then remember the thousand and one things to be done in the house, not done, ill-done, half-done,

or, perhaps, entirely forgotten until Saturday night, or Sunday morning, or Monday forenoon, when children and servants huddle up to me, asking for this and for that; and how, and why, and when is all this to be done? It crazes me—puts me out. I shut myself up in my chamber, sink into my rocking-chair, and try to turn off my cares awhile with a page or two of—

“But no matter, you would not approve of it. This is just myself, Jane, and I never drew my picture to any one else but you. A deplorable picture, you will think—I know you will—for a mother and a housekeeper; a widow, too, with a double burden. But it is just so, and now what upon earth shall I do? I cannot, for my life, feel the cordial love for work which you talk of! No, no! It is not in me. The Ethiopian, you know—Last summer, when sick, and my recovery was doubtful, I felt no dread of death. I looked forward to it as a release. There is rest, you know, beyond the grave.”

“Rest, Cornelia, for the people of God! Rest for those who have striven, wrestled, fought the good fight, and are faithful unto death. But the fearful and unbelieving are destined to a far different state!”

Alas! all I said then, or said afterward, produced little or no impression upon Mrs. Smith. My visits were frequent, praying from the heart that she might be aroused to proper effort, both for the sake of her children and of herself. It availed nothing. The Ethiopian cannot change his skin, nor the leopard his spots.

The habits we form in youth, abide. If we are taught to be earnest, intent, courageous and faithful in the duties and amid the trials of youth, nothing in after years can wrest our habits from us. We must carry

them with us, and, with the Divine blessing, they will fit us for its scenes and emergencies, no matter what they may be—whether of trial or prosperity.

My young friend!—whose eye is passing over these pages—if you are suffered to languish away the spring of your life in self-indulgence, in shrinking from and avoiding everything that is disagreeable—in doing only what is pleasant—in a sprightly indolence or an undisciplined activity, from the effects of it upon your physical, moral, and social nature, you can never recover to the latest day of your life. Be assured of it. When you realize and begin to feel their sad influences upon you, you can do much by a vigorous process of self-improvement. The grace of God can do much for you, but you can never recover the forming period of your life. The grace of God can only be received into such a moral habitation as you have prepared for it. Its power changes your affections, and makes a new creature of you, but the habits of childhood and youth will still show themselves, and be most important helps or hindrances in all the walks of life.

Poor Mrs. Smith lived on, in indolent inefficiency, excusing herself from every duty which seemed formidable or disagreeable; and her own weakness made them appear doubly so, by the declaration that she had “no knack,” “no taste,” “no tact;” or “she was so situated,” or “she was so unaccustomed,” or “she was so inadequate.” Heavily did she bear the burden of life, complaining of its crosses, appalled by its toils, and sinking beneath its perplexities. She died not long after—I might almost say for lack of courage to live.

Ah! we must be trained to the right use of life—

trained in thorough, practical, enduring habits while we are young, in order wisely and skilfully to discharge life's duties in riper years. And while this may be seen and readily acknowledged in everything relating to our outward life, the same training is no less important for the vigorous growth of our religious character.

Notwithstanding the general prevalence of religious profession among us, the maintenance of firm and undeviating religious principles was never more difficult. Amusements called harmless, temptations most insinuating, an easy morality, fashion, a general taste for impure, or at least dangerous, fiction, face us at every step with their seducing influences. It is hard to keep in the narrow way, and yet there is no other way for the Christian disciple than that strait and narrow way whereof the Lord spake. It is as strait and narrow now as ever. To walk in it, what earnestness of purpose—what resolution of will—what unfaltering exertion—what prompt obedience—what unceasing prayer—what perpetual watchfulness—what a vigorous pressing forward, is at all times necessary! To attain a healthy, manly, vigorous piety, a degree of piety that will truly elevate and distinguish the character, **INWROUGHT HABITS OF RESOLUTION AND PERSEVERANCE ARE ALL-IMPORTANT.** Is it not so?



